

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 17-19 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the specification, and claims 1 and 17 are amended. The amendments introduce no new matter. Claims 16 and 20-29 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited in those claims. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies shown to Applicant's representative by Examiner Pickett in the September 25, 2006 personal interview. Applicant's separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowability regarding claims 18 and 19. These claims are indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant asserts that the amendment to claim 1 places these claims in condition for allowance, as discussed below.

The Office Action objects to the disclosure as omitting the copending application number. The specification is amended to obviate this objection. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Specifically, the Office Action asserts a lack of antecedent basis for the term "said grooves" that was contained in claim 1; asserts that the previous term "generally top planar surface" was unclear; and that the term "high co-efficient of friction" rendered claim 16 indefinite. The cancellation of claim 16 renders the separate rejection of that claim moot. Claim 1 is amended to obviate the rejections of that claim and the claims depending therefrom.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, are respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 and 5-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0033179 A1 to DiFrancesco in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,305,879 to Noschese; and rejects claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over DiFrancesco and Noschese further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,907,246 to Abraham et al. (hereinafter "Abraham"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action concedes that DiFrancesco fails to disclose the plurality of longitudinal grooves for receiving strips. The Office Action relies on Noschese to fill this shortfall. Specifically, the Office Action references a plurality of slots 38/40 of Noschese for receiving end stop member 42, for the purpose of adjustability of the compartment length. However, the slots 38/40 of Noschese cannot reasonably be considered to correspond to grooves with all of the features recited in at least independent claim 1.

Claim 1 recites, among other features, a plurality of strips sized to fill one set of the grooves and placed in each of the grooves of the one set of grooves, thereby forming a plurality of pockets for receiving dies. Noschese does not teach, or otherwise render obvious, each of the grooves of a set of grooves filled with a plurality of strips. Rather, the slots 38/40 are intended to accommodate one end stop member 42, if needed, thereby filling one slot, in order to adjust the effective storage or working length of the connector receiving channels 16-18 (see col. 3, lines 22-25 of Noschese). One end stop member 42 is used in instances when the columns of connector rows would not fully extend from end 20 to end 22. As such, filling each groove of a set of grooves is contrary to the teachings of Noschese.

Were one to fill each of the grooves of the set of grooves disclosed in Noschese, it would still fail to teach, or otherwise render obvious, forming a plurality of pockets for

receiving dies, said pockets having a bottom and side walls comprising a segment of an unfilled machined groove and end walls comprising segments of the sides of strips, each of said plurality of pockets having the planar dimensions approximately corresponding to a length and a width of a die to be received. First of all, the connector receiving channels 16-18 would not have end walls comprising segments of the sides of strips because the end 22 remains open until closed by the cover 14 (see col. 3, lines 35-40). Further, Noschese does not teach, or otherwise render obvious, any resulting "pocket" between slots 38 and 40 with dimensions approximately corresponding to a length and a width of a die to be received.

Claim 1 further recites the feature wherein dies are received to both sides of at least one of the plurality of strips. Support for this feature can be found at least in the embodiments disclosed in Figs. 4 and 5. Specifically, those Figures depict embodiments wherein pockets 27 are formed on both sides of at least one divider 24, thus allowing for dies to be received to both sides of the strip.

The applied prior art references do not teach, nor can they reasonably be considered to have suggested such a feature. Specifically, the strip 42 disclosed in Noschese is intended to act as an end stop member. As such, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have looked to the structure disclosed in Noschese to combine with DiFrancesco to provide for the feature wherein dies are received to both sides of at least one of the plurality of strips.

As mentioned above, claim 1 recites the feature each of said plurality of pockets having the planar dimensions approximately corresponding to a length and a width of a die to be received. DiFrancesco discloses a test site array providing a matrix in which individual recesses are configured by positioning the dividers 14 and the parallel ridges 16 in a selected, spaced relation, one to the other (see paragraph [0037] of DiFrancesco). Individual recesses 18 are adapted to receive an electronic device. Additionally, the recesses may be profiled to

provide a receptacle that conforms to the shape of the part or component placed therein. For example, they may be generally circular in shape with a flat portion, such that the recess conforms to the shape of a wafer (see paragraph [0039]). As such, DiFrancesco may fairly be considered to teach adjusting the shape of the recesses 18 to conform to a shape of the part or component to be placed therein. However, it does not teach, or otherwise render obvious, the feature of forming pockets having planar dimensions approximately corresponding to a length and a width of a die to be received.

Support for this feature can be found at least in paragraphs [0030]-[0032] of Applicant's disclosure. For example, in paragraph [0030] for dies having a width of about 1.0 mm the pockets may be about 1.3 mm wide. Noschese likewise fails to teach, or otherwise render obvious this feature. The receiving channels 16-18 of Noschese are adjustable in length and receive various numbers of dies in a column. Individually sized pockets are not taught, or otherwise rendered obvious.

For at least the above reasons, the applied prior art references do not teach, nor can they reasonably be considered to have suggested, the combinations of features recited in independent claim 1. Further, claims 2-15 and 17 are also neither taught, nor would they have been suggested, by the applied prior art references for at least the respective dependence of these claims directly or indirectly on independent claim 1, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-15 and 17-19 as being anticipated by, or unpatentable over, the applied prior art references are respectfully requested.

These arguments were presented to Examiner Pickett during the personal interview. Agreement was reached that an Amendment specifying the precision of the compartments in

conjunction with arguments about the inability of Noschese to accommodate articles in multiple locations surrounding the dividers, would appear to overcome the art of record, subject to further search and/or consideration. The amendments to the claims are taken in light of this agreement.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-15 and 17, in addition to the previous indication of allowability regarding claims 18 and 19, are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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